



Lamar University – M.Ed. in Educational Technology Leadership

Reflections of Course-based Embedded Assignments

Directions: In submitting your Course-based Embedded Assignment located in Appendix I of the Internship Handbook, you are required to complete a reflection of the identified assignments in your course wiki/e-portfolio. These reflections will be used to assist you in completing your EDLD 5388/5370 (*Please note that course number changes in Fall 2010*) Internship comprehensive exam final report. Students should use and cite their textbook references as well as two additional references when writing each reflection. The reflection must consist of statements regarding the knowledge you gained from the assignment and how the assignment helped you master the Technology Facilitator Standard(s) /Indicator(s).

Course Number:	Course Name:	Course-based Embedded Hours (see Appendix I)
5301:8032	Action Research	A. 8 hours B. 5 hours Total Hours: 13 hrs.

Description of the Assignment/Performance Tasks (see Appendix I)	My action Research Blog Course Reflection says this better than I can possibly recreate anywhere else without self plagiarizing. I believe you will find that it meets all the criteria of Column 1. http://pastartz.blogspot.com/2011/06/reflecting-upon-highlights-of-5301-8032.html
<p>Note: Reflection at a critical level means writing text that reveals your opinion of the reading or experience, why you hold that opinion, how the experience/assignment/reading could be improved, how you see the reading or experience as consistent or inconsistent with what you have learned so far, implications for the future, etc. Reflection should include more content than just a recitation of facts and you should document your writing with a minimum of 3 references.</p> <p>Self –Assessment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically reflect (see note above; not just recitation of facts) upon the knowledge you gained from the assignment. (3 Points) 2. Critically reflect upon the relationship between any new information you gained from the assignment with old information you previously held to be true. (2 Points) 3. How did the relationship between the old and new information you learned affect your personal experience with the assignment? (2 Points) <p>Learn as a Learner</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically reflect (see note above; not just 	<p>A. Course-Embedded Internship Log – 8 Action Research – 8hrs</p> <p>Course-Embedded Internship <i>Students engage in identifying an action research topic(s) or research questions and designing a draft action research plan completing a recommended template or format of a blueprint of the action research plan.</i> How can interactive student response systems be utilized to increase student cognitive achievement levels? <i>This is posted in TK20 under 5301 and in my wiki:</i> https://pastartz.wikispaces.com</p> <p>B. Log – 9 Action Research – 5hrs <i>Students review comments from colleagues and site supervisors and engage in revising their draft action research plan. By the end of Week 5, students should confer with their site supervisor(s) and agree on an action research topic and plan.</i> <i>This is posted in TK20 under 5301 and in my wiki:</i> http://pastartz.blogspot.com</p> <p>Total Hours - 13hrs</p>

recitation of facts) upon your approach and strategies used in completing the assignment. (3 Points)

2. Critically reflect upon how you learn as a learner and how you assess your own performance in completing the assignment(s). (2 Points)
3. How did your learning and interaction with colleagues (such as discussion forum, web conferences, wiki and blog participation, etc.) affect the results of your performance? (2 Points)

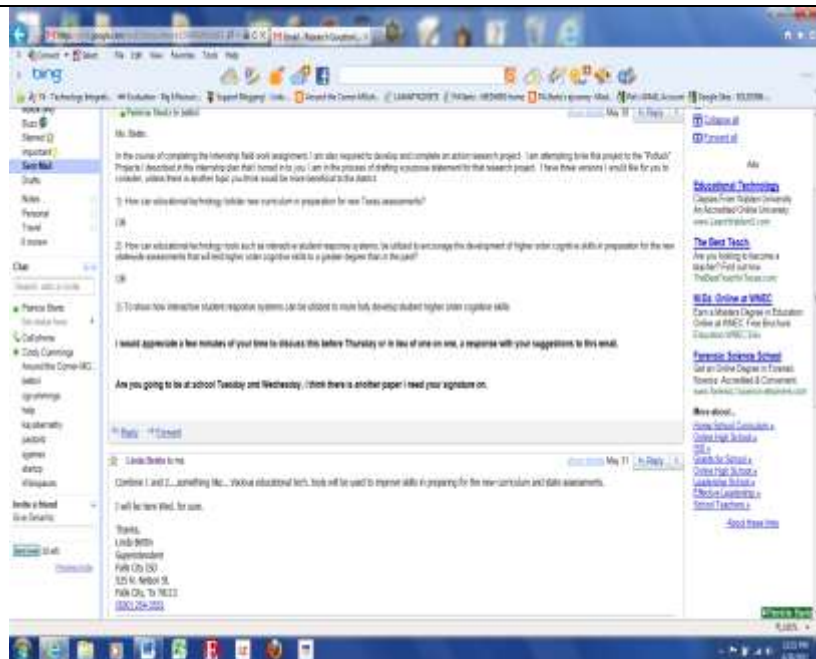
Lifelong Learning Skills

1. Critically reflect (see note above; not just recitation of facts) upon what you gained about learning and how you learn that will impact your future learning. (3 Points)
2. How will your past interactions and collaborations with colleagues impact your future learning experiences? (2 Points)
3. As a lifelong learner, what questions or issues challenge you and are worthy of future research or investigation? (2 Points)

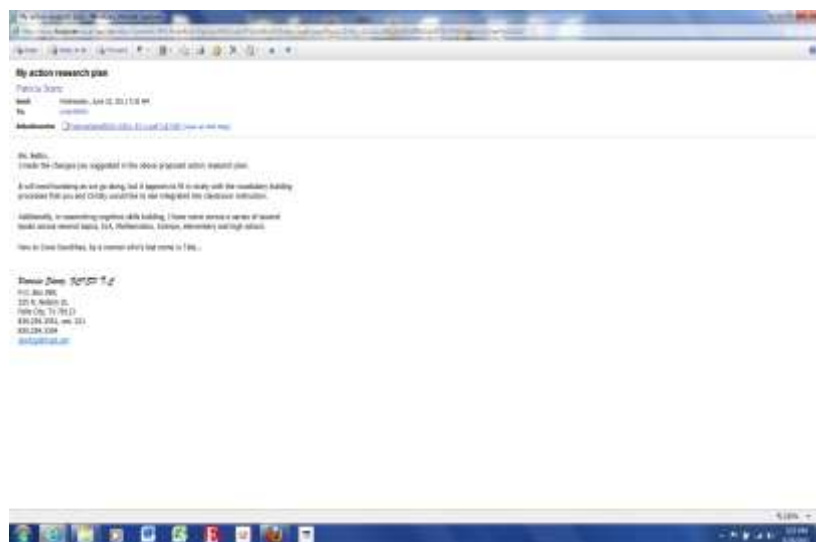
Additional Criteria

1. Content posted to e-Portfolio wiki/blog/Google site (1 Point)
2. Mechanics (1 Point)
3. APA Format (1 Point)
4. Minimum of 3 References (1 Point)

(Maximum 25 points)



Startz, P., Bettin, L. personal communication, May 31, 2011.



Startz, P., Bettin, L. personal communication, June 22, 2011.

Startz, P. (2011, June 23), PA.Startz's ejourney-Mastering Educational Technology, Reflecting Upon the Highlights of EDLD 5301:8032 Action Research, **retrieved from:** <http://pastartz.blogspot.com/2011/06/reflecting-upon-highlights-of-5301-8032.html>

Document included in entirety as Attachment A:

Attachment A:

This is a copy of my post, just in case it disappears before or after my courses are done.

In reflecting upon the highlights of 5301: Action Research.....

I would have to say the lecture that made the biggest difference to me was the very first one in which Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Arterbury were discussing how to get started in action research. Dr. Arterbury introduced the process with the statement, “newcomers to the research process refer to a term paper containing a review of related literature as a ‘research paper’.” Then, he exclaimed, “Of course, now we know better! We have learned that research involves adding something new to what is already known about your topic. Specifically it means going beyond the current body of literature on a given topic, perhaps to answer a question as yet unexplored by those who have come before.”(p2. Of week #1 video transcripts). This set the tone for the whole course and told me to expect to be going beyond the traditional research process as I knew it.

This course foundational video was built upon with the two books required for the course, *Leading with Passion and Knowledge* by Nancy F. Dana and *Examining What We Do To Improve Our Schools: 8 Steps From Analysis to Action*, a collaborative work by Sandra Harris, Stacey Edmonson, and Julie Combs. These two books have become critical reference items for the action research process that will consume a major portion of my time over the course of the next fourteen months. Through the activities of the last five weeks, we have utilized these two books to learn what the process is from the Dana text and how to apply the process from the Harris text. Dana’s utilized a description of action research she borrowed from Elliot(1988) which “describes action research as a continual set of spirals consisting of reflection and action.” She clarifies this description when she tells us:

Each spiral involves (1) clarifying and diagnosing a practical situation that needs to be improved or a practical problem that needs to be resolved, (2) formulating action

strategies for improving the situation or resolving the problem, (3) implementing the action strategies and evaluating their effectiveness, and (4) clarifying the situation, resulting in new definitions of problems or areas for improvement, and so on, to the next spiral of reflection and action.

The educational system is shifting with national trends to a state where each individual is responsible and accountable for the successful completion of the myriad of activities that comprise their role in the educational organization that employs them. Information about every academic subject, pedagogy, psychology, etc. is more readily available via the internet than ever before. Each person assimilates that information in different ways and applies it to the tasks at hand in different ways. The end result is that if there is an issue that needs “fixing” there is no excuse to allow a problem to worsen. Action research gives administrators a set of proven steps to move from analysis of a problem to a set of possible solutions, to prescriptive actions, to re-analysis, and so on, as soon as a problem surfaces. Utilizing the available tools, group stakeholders within the educational community and consensus building techniques, administrators can build their educational “family” bonds as they begin the process of continuous improvement immediately and spontaneously throughout the year. Student achievement increases as the result in improvements in instruction and the learning environment that affects kids every day.

New legislation places more of the responsibility for campus success squarely on the shoulders of the principal; it is the principal who is the administrator responsible for hiring and firing on his/her campus. Now, more than ever, Principals need to have action plans in place that enable them to mitigate problems quickly to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. By the same token, teachers need immediate access to resources and a means to take immediate action to help them mitigate everything that gets in the way of their primary responsibility successfully teaching students how to learn what they need to be successful in life, in their classroom, and on state and national assessments. Continuous and meaningful action research by communities of teacher learners is the answer to this need as well. Enthusiastic teachers, bonded together as action researchers, responsible for their own learning will be the corner stone of any Principal's overall success and every student's individual success.

In order to achieve these successes, Principals, Teachers, and students will rely on daily and frequent access to high quality reliable information most readily available via internet and library search engine searches. Successful searches are searches that produce valid, reliable research in a timely manner. All stakeholders quickly learn that the quality of their search question phrases and key terms determines the quality of the resulting information and the length of time it takes to locate, verify validity, and procure that information. Administrators and teachers quickly discover that this research cannot be done on an island...it is a community project.

The process of distributing the research, not only distributes the work, it builds a group consensus of what needs to be fixed, distributes the learning requiring each member of the diverse campus family to participate in the process. Since each member of the learning community contributes in some small way to the solution, they are more agreeable to applying the prescribed “fix”. They become contributing member to the group(s) overall success. In so doing, they model this process of continual questioning, and problem solving to their students and to their students' parents who help their students complete projects at home and learn to interactively communicate with their students' teachers about projects, their students' roles in those projects, and the overall

practice of success in which they are actively participating. If we are lucky, astute parents will watch how problems are being solved and apply the process to their family and work situations. In this way, action research will revolutionize not only the K-12 learning environment, but also the communities served by those learning institutions.

As I reflect upon the last five weeks, I realize, the focus for this entire five week course has been gaining ownership of the action research process. As I worked through the assignments, I have learned how to design an action research project that will become part of my internship activities. When I started thinking it was an almost impossible task, it was in utilizing the reading and written assignments, peer comments to directed class discussion blog questions, my blog, and my wiki, in addition to the weekly video conferences with Dr. Abshire, that I learned how to complete the process through "hands-on doing." It was through doing that I gained valuable problem solving insight as both peer and teacher input was given via the video conference and posted on the class discussion post, my blog, and my wiki. This feedback helped me begin to solve problems with local buy-in to my project, and collect additional resources for project activities. For example, acting upon Dr. Abshire's suggestion, discussed the issues of technology oriented, academic, and other needed professional development with my site mentor and received permission to create and distribute a technology use /professional development survey to our teachers. Acting upon peer input at my blog, I conducted online research and found some really amazing examples of activities that others are using to cultivate the growth of student cognitive abilities. Some of these activities do utilize "clickers" others could be easily adapted to "clicker" use. I also found a series of books on the subject of stimulating brain development, the "Growing Dendrites" series published by author, Marcia L. Tate and the books, "Building Academic Vocabulary" and "The Highly Engaged Classroom," published by authors Robert Marzano and Debra J. Pickering have many useful activities to enhance cognitive development. Additionally, I found the book, "How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students" in order to more effectively contribute to teacher and student success by providing more effective feedback. I intend to adapt at least six of these to my Project Potluck with web 2.0 and "clicker" adaptations.

All are invaluable to the action research process. In retrospect, it is in applying web 2.0 tools to solve old and new problems in new ways, that makes action research possible in a timely fashion. It isn't that the research could not be conducted before the advent of web 2.0 tools (wikis, blogs, discussion posts, fast internet access 24/7), it is the fact that the time and effort to complete the research has been compacted and made easy. What would have taken months or years, can now be done in minutes, hours, days, or weeks. Prescriptions can be applied, tweaked and re-applied in the time it used to take to complete a literary review..."Life in the Fast lane..."—American Education Style!

In completing some of the tasks of my principal internship, I have stumbled into a set of questions that form the basis of an action research inquiry that can make or break the success of each classroom teacher, each campus, and ultimately the principal.... I find that I am asking, "What professional development is required by the state?", "Where do administrators find professional development topics?", and "How do administrators determine what professional development to provide?". Additionally, "Are administrators responsible for teachers' meeting ongoing academic professional development requirements?" Most recently I have also been assigned the task of creating an online assessment tool that will work for teacher evaluations. ... "What tools do we use to effectively evaluate the quality of professional development, of the teaching that results

from that professional development?", and "How do we provide effective feedback and prescribe corrective action?" and "How do we get it all done within the confines of the traditional school day?" It appears learning communities utilizing embedded professional development and action research facilitated with web 2.0 tools are gaining ground quickly as key tools to accomplish these tasks successfully. I believe I will find web 2.0 tools will provide the answer to an online teacher evaluation tool that costs only my time to create and implement as our budget for this task is \$0.00.

My action research plan has been reviewed by the Principal at least once, and by the Superintendent a couple of times. It may transform as time goes on to a question of activities that will help teachers help students develop higher order cognitive skills instead of just how clickers can be used to facilitate the process. Time, budget, teacher, administrative buy in are critical; the survey mentioned above will play a role in determining the direction of the action research plan from here.

Arterbury, Dr., Jenkins, Dr., Lamar University Masters of Educational Technology Leadership course 5301:8032 Video Transcript, retrieved: <http://lamar.epicclms.net>, June 23, 2011.

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Harris, S., Edmonson, S., Combs, J., (2010). *Examining What We Do To Improve Our School: 8 Steps from Analysis to Action*, Eye on Education, Inc., Larchmont, NY.

Marzano, R. and Pickering, D. (2005). *Building Academic Vocabulary: Teachers Manual*, Association for Curriculum and Development, Alexandria, VA.

Marzano, R. and Pickering, D. (2011). *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, Marzano Research Laboratory, Bloomington, IN

Brookhart, S. (2008). *How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students*, the Association of Curriculum and Development, Alexandria, VA.

Tate, M. (2011). Marcia L. Tate Author Resource page http://www.amazon.com/Marcia-L.-Tate/e/B001IGOPX8/ref=ntt_dp_epwbk_0 retrieved June 23, 2011 from <http://www.Amazon.com>.

Young, R. (2011, June 26), Robin's Technology Tips, Retrieved from: <http://www.robinstechtips.com/?s=turning+points>

Thanks Lindsay, Robin, Shanna, Shanda, and Dr. Abshire for your input during the last five weeks. It gave me the desire to continue.